

Opelika, Ala. | Methodist ministry repairs homes of impoverished rural residents

For the Alabama Rural Ministry, Make A Difference Day was about putting faith into action as 72 volunteers tackled dozens of projects.



MAKE A DIFFERENCE
DAY AWARDS 2013

"They brought more than hammers and nails. They brought hope," says Betty Dozier, 54, a disabled veteran whose house got fresh drywall to eliminate mold.

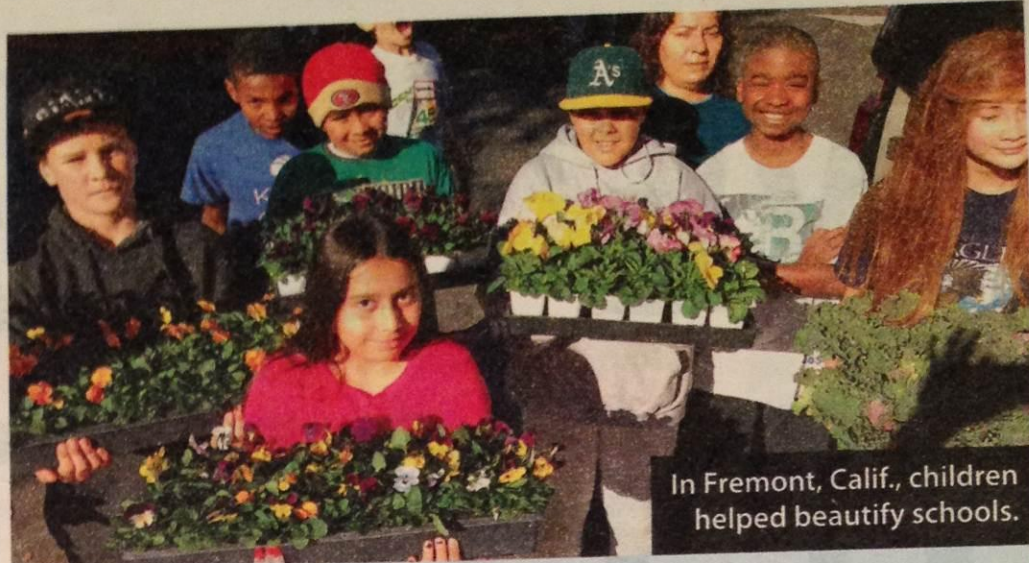
Her home was one of four repaired by the Methodist ministry. Volunteers also cleaned a park, entertained seniors and prepped a new food bank.

ARM's Make A Difference Day "grows most every year," says director Lisa Pierce. In fact, it's the focal point of Poverty Awareness Week, which raised \$31,000 last fall to apply toward the 130 homes on a waiting list.

Eleven volunteers from Liberty United Methodist Church built a porch for a needy couple. Explains carpenter Joe O'Neal: "We're supposed to help our neighbors. That blesses everyone."

Ministry's
seventh
annual effort
brought hope
along with
help.

\$10,000 award from
Newman's Own goes to
Alabama Rural Ministry



In Fremont, Calif., children helped beautify schools.

Plus, three City Award winners ...

USA WEEKEND, with the Corporation for National & Community Service and Newman's Own, salutes volunteer efforts led by cities. Each receives a \$10,000 donation from Newman's Own. They are:

Fremont, Calif. The city's Human Relations Commission recruited a record 1,339 residents for 76 projects in its 11th Make A Difference Day. In a city where 167 languages are spoken, "it's the one day when people put aside cultural differences" to help their neighbors, says coordinator Christine Beitsch. *\$10,000 award from Newman's Own goes to Fremont Family Resource Center*

Albuquerque. Led by the city's Open Space Division and the non-profit Nicodemus Wilderness Project, 41 volunteers scrubbed graffiti off boulders, planted shrubs to fight erosion and rounded up trash at Piedra Lisa Canyon. It was the group's 13th Make A Difference Day, and "our city is better off for it," says Mayor Richard Berry. *\$10,000 award from Newman's Own goes to Nicodemus Wilderness Project*

Kettering, Ohio. For 19 years, "Make A Difference Day has been a staple of our community," says City Manager Mark Schwieterman, who helped 200 people clean up Richman Heights. The event kicked off a Cities of Service initiative to revitalize one neighborhood each year. *\$10,000 award from Newman's Own goes to Kettering Parks Foundation*



Like the good news?
Read other inspiring
volunteer stories at
makeadifferenceday.com

... and the All-Star Award!

This award recognizes a past national honoree who continues to excel on Make A Difference Day. As reported in our April 12-14 issue, online voters chose the winner: Melbourne Central Catholic High, St. Joseph Catholic School, West Shore Junior/Senior High and Lake Washington Fellowship in Melbourne and Palm Bay, Fla. *\$10,000 award from the Gannett Foundation and USA WEEKEND goes to the ALS Association Florida Chapter*

— Stories by Pamela Brown, Tom Lent and Jennifer Mendelsohn

The next Make A Difference Day

is Saturday, Oct. 26. Will you join the millions of people helping others? Make A Difference Day is sponsored by USA WEEKEND Magazine in partnership with Points of Light and Newman's Own, which again will

